

# earthQuaker

living  
witness  
Quakers for Sustainability



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Photo by Edward Hill

Quakers for Equality at the Occupy St. Paul's tent city - Nov 2011

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## Sustainability Toolkit Launched

The Sustainability Toolkit was sent out to all local meetings in mid-November. This new publication from Living Witness and QPSW aims to support British Friends in our commitment to become a low carbon sustainable community.

Living Witness Resource People met in November and we are offering workshops to local meetings to help them work with the Toolkit. Do get in touch with Jasmine ([jasmine@livingwitness.org.uk](mailto:jasmine@livingwitness.org.uk)) if you'd like an event in your meeting.

The Toolkit includes a range of updated Living Witness resources such as study sessions for local meetings and practical advice for reducing your greenhouse gas emissions. There are also some new elements, in particular case studies from Friends who have been developing their sustainability witness, and some new 'think pieces' on the principles underlying our testimony in this area.

The book is distributed with copies of the new climate impact calculators for individuals and meetings. The package sent to local meeting clerks and correspondents also included the DVD of Pam Lunn's Swarthmore Lecture, *Costing Not Less Than Everything*. You can find an electronic copy of the Toolkit and the easy-to-use online versions of the calculators at [www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability](http://www.quaker.org.uk/sustainability) and at the Living Witness website, [www.livingwitness.org.uk](http://www.livingwitness.org.uk)

Living Witness staff and trustees have been working with QPSW staff for about a year to produce the Toolkit and it has been our most productive collaboration to date. We're especially appreciative of Sunniva Taylor at QPSW who did most of the work of pulling everything together, writing several of the sections and editing the document overall. We're also delighted with the way Quaker Communications Department have designed the look and feel of the book and the online climate impact calculators.

Do make sure your meeting's clerk or correspondent has made the Toolkit available in the meeting – and see whether Friends would like study sessions based on it. Perhaps you'd like to watch the Swarthmore Lecture DVD together?

**Laurie Michaelis**

"Its 3.32 in the morning and I'm awake because my great, great grandchildren won't let me sleep.

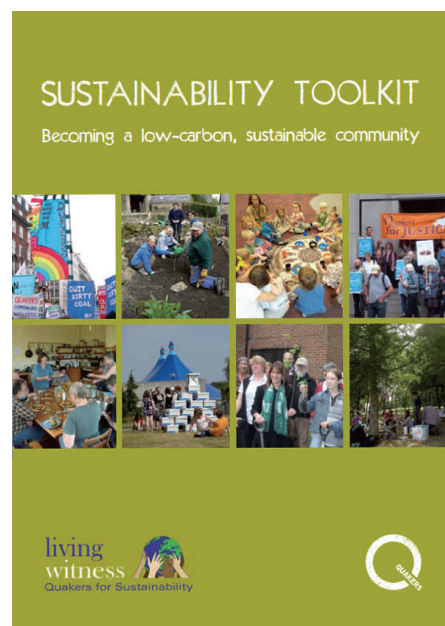
My great, great grandchildren ask me in dreams,

What did you do when while the planet was plundered?

What did you do when the earth was unravelling?

Surely you did something when the seasons started failing?"

**Drew Dellinger**



# Evidence of Planned Obsolescence in Consumer Electrical/Electronics

I originally qualified as an electrical/electronics engineer. I have long been aware that many consumer electrical & electronic appliances are not just made with components that limit their lifespan so as to fit an unregulated competitive price but much worse than that, are often DELIBERATELY designed in such a way, with such mechanisms and such underrated mechanical & electrical components, (that would cost an absolute minimum amount to have made much better) so they deliberately do not last much beyond a warranty and keep you coming back for more. Over a couple of decades I have taken apart many items for example fluorescent tube electronic ballasts, convector heaters, extractor fans, washing machines, computer printers, gas boilers (electronics in these only) and modified the mechanisms or changed components and most of the time got indefinite lifetimes out of them thereafter.



The purpose of this letter is not just to explain this to you but also to show you a video I found by someone who like me likes to look deeply at things, encourage you to do so more too, to perhaps take what is presented to you less on trust as almost everyone does and give you some evidence about what is really going on in this materialistic consumer economic system. Also hopefully to further undermine your confidence in it and get you (if not already) to join the growing millions demanding change.

The video is ostensibly about light bulbs but at the beginning then much more usefully & specifically at the end talks about computer printers. The mechanism used to limit their lifespan I came across when I took apart a 2nd hand HP inkjet printer a couple of years ago. I had bought it off a friend, having had a further 7 years life from it, but had then stopped working. When I found the internal waste ink reservoir (that the film here talks about at the end) totally full & clogged and I cleaned it out the printer started working again and hasn't further failed yet, (except for ink cartridges which I repeatedly injection refill) so must be 10+ years old now and still going fine.

Much of the subtitles are in German but the voice is all in English. Highly recommended:  
The Light Bulb Conspiracy: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=endUcoHsCVY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=endUcoHsCVY)

**Tony Harvey**

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## Towards a Low Carbon Sustainable Community

The last issue of earthQuaker included Minute 36 from Yearly Meeting, making the commitment to become a low carbon sustainable community. It's been exciting to hear about the interest and energy that has been generated among British Quakers.

Friends do seem to be taking Minute 36 very seriously, seeing it as one of the most significant and profound decisions Yearly Meeting has taken. Meeting for Sufferings in December agreed to set up a 'Minute 36 Commitment Group' bringing together various Quaker organisations working for sustainability. Both Sufferings and YM Trustees are required to report annually to Yearly Meeting on progress in addressing the commitment, which is to be a major focus on the YM agenda in May 2012.

We at Living Witness have been looking carefully at the implications of the commitment at our recent events, including the Link Group gathering in September/October, the Quakers and Climate Change retreat at Bamford in November, and most recently our Resource People's gathering. Participants have reported a mix of experiences in their local meetings. Some have taken up the challenge and are addressing it in many ways, including new study groups, practical projects, initiatives from elders and

premises and finance committees and more. Others have so far found the commitment difficult to absorb, wondering whether the commitment is really Quakerly, or whether they can find the time and energy for the work that is needed.

One theme that has come out really strongly is the need to support Meetings in working through conflict and tensions around sustainability. This commitment requires us to make real changes in the way we function individually and corporately. It means doing things together.

Friends with differing personalities and spiritualities can rub along together well enough for an hour of worship every Sunday and the odd study group. But finding a way forward together on climate change often brings our different approaches into opposition. Some of the choices affect people personally and deeply – thermostat settings, food, the way we spend our money can all be sources of friction. Mostly it seems easier to stay with the status quo.

It can seem as if Friends are behind the curve in responding to climate change. Anglicans and Methodists have been much more organised and vocal in their approaches, while we are still edging towards unity. But slow, careful Quaker process just might lead to personal and corporate change that is more far-reaching. And by engaging with the tensions carefully and with self-awareness, we can build a body of insight and experience that is of vital value to the world.

At Living Witness we've had a lot of experience of working with meetings experiencing tensions and conflict. We see this as a major focus for our work in supporting the Yearly Meeting commitment. If you'd like support in addressing the tensions in your meeting, please do get in touch now.

**Laurie Michaelis**

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## Useful Info

There are now a large amount of websites covering climate change, here are just a few, sent in by Living Witness members.

Green Neighbourhood challenge: [www.greenneighbourhood.co.uk](http://www.greenneighbourhood.co.uk)

I Count - Stop Climate Chaos coalition - Reduce your footprint and find out how: - [www.icount.org.uk](http://www.icount.org.uk)

Energy Saving Trust website which provides information for communities: [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)



[www.icount.org.uk](http://www.icount.org.uk)

Ashton Hayes aiming to become England's first carbon neutral village : [www.goingcarbonneutral.co.uk/](http://www.goingcarbonneutral.co.uk/)

Raising public awareness and understanding of climate change. : [www.climatetalk.org.uk/](http://www.climatetalk.org.uk/)

Campaign for responsible investment: [www.activateyourmoney.org](http://www.activateyourmoney.org)

Parliament Square Peace Campaign: [www.brianhaw.tv/](http://www.brianhaw.tv/)

Green Blizzard - Green Living Tips On How To Reduce Your Carbon Footprint: [www.greenblizzard.com/](http://www.greenblizzard.com/)

A Rocha is a Christian environmental and nature conservation movement: [www.arocha.org.uk](http://www.arocha.org.uk)

Praying and campaigning for global justice: [www.speak.org.uk](http://www.speak.org.uk)

Campaign against climate change: [www.campaigncc.org](http://www.campaigncc.org)

## Back in our Day - The Green thing

In the queue at the store, the cashier told an older woman that she should bring her own grocery bags because plastic bags weren't good for the environment.

The woman apologized to him and explained, "We didn't have the green thing back in my day."

He responded, "That's our problem today. Your generation did not care enough to save our environment."

She was right -- our generation didn't have the green thing in its day.

Back then, we returned milk bottles, soda bottles and beer bottles to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over. So they really were recycled.

But we didn't have the green thing back in our day.

We walked up stairs, because we didn't have an escalator in every store and office building. We walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time we had to go two blocks.



[www.greenblizzard.com](http://www.greenblizzard.com)

But she was right. We didn't have the green thing in our day.

Back then, we washed the baby's nappies because we didn't have the throw-away kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy gobbling machine burning up 220 volts -- wind and solar power really did dry the clothes. Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing.

But that old lady is right; we didn't have the green thing back in our day.

Back then, we had one TV, or radio, in the house -- not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen the size of a handkerchief (remember them?), not a screen the size of the local cinema.

In the kitchen, we blended and stirred by hand because we didn't have electric machines to do everything for us.

When we packaged a fragile item to send in the mail, we used a wadded up old newspaper to cushion it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap.

Back then, we didn't fire up an engine and burn gasoline just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human power. We exercised by working so we didn't need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity.

But she's right; we didn't have the green thing back then.

We drank from a fountain when we were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time we had a drink of water.

We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen, and we replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull.

But we didn't have the green thing back then.

Back then, people took the tram or a bus and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their mums into a 24-hour taxi service.

We had one electrical socket in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And we didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal from satellites 2,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest pizza joint.

But isn't it sad the current generation laments how wasteful we old folks were just because we didn't have the green thing back then?

**by an unknown American author**

# Eco Co-housing Community in Lancaster



[www.lancastercohousing.org.uk](http://www.lancastercohousing.org.uk)

After years of hard work, a community group in Lancaster has just started building 41 eco-homes. They've still a few houses left; in case you fancy joining, or enticing friends and family to move to Lancaster. It's one of the biggest projects of its type in Europe and as well as your own super-insulated home, resident's get use of a range of communal facilities (indoor and out): guest rooms, kid's room, gardens, common house, car pool, workshop and office space, etc. It's a new way of doing traditional communities.

## Is Lancaster Cohousing for you?

If your answer is yes to most of these questions then it probably is...

- Would you like to live somewhere where you know, share values with and socialise with your neighbours?
- Do you want a social life you don't have to plan in advance?
- Would you like to share large living, cooking, dining and outdoor spaces?
- Do you have ecological values?
- Would you like to regularly eat shared vegetarian or vegan meals?
- Would you be happy for your car use to be limited to occasional use of a car pool scheme?
- Do you want to live in or close to Lancaster?
- Do you wish to own a private home with self contained kitchen and living space?
- Would you like to benefit from the ecological and financial advantages of sharing some facilities with other households?

Would you like to know that children can play outdoors in a car free environment?

See [www.lancastercohousing.org.uk/](http://www.lancastercohousing.org.uk/)

See <http://lancastercohousing.blogspot.com/2011/11/timelapse-footage-from-site-seasons.html>

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## What is a meditation?

Contemplating, with the mind, a particular inspiration  
Focused thought, directed mental process  
An opportunity to free one's mind from the detritus of everyday existence  
A withdrawal from everyday living, searching for peace of mind  
A solo journey  
Time to spare  
Time to indulge  
Time out  
Time to seek another plane  
Time to lose oneself  
Time in withdrawal  
Time to be quiet and alone  
Time to watch the birds  
Time to watch the flowers  
...the trees  
...the wind  
...the clouds  
...the sky  
A focus on all those elements that enrich existence  
Appreciation of a glorious universe

Written cooperatively by Dorking Friends Meditation group.

## Dislequality Give & Take Day

Following a concern first voiced by a Friend in Disley Meeting about the potential impact of the Coalition Government 'cuts' a team of Disley Friends came together to decide on possible actions. One Friend already had some experience of running a Give or Take Day earlier that year as a Sustainable Village project. Give and Take days are now becoming familiar projects in Transition groups and we decided that this non stigmatising way of people being able to acquire good quality items that they needed would serve that function while at the same time contribute to sustainability as a means of waste reduction.

Under the umbrella of "Dislequality", the Disley Meeting team decided to invite Disley churches, the Women's Institute and the Parish Council to join together to organise the event and it was duly held at Disley Methodist Church on Saturday 5th November. A Cheshire East Recycling Officer, supported by Waste Reduction volunteers (who included one our 'own' East Cheshire Friends), came with their displays and talked to people about Love Food Hate Waste and home composting. They also added to the free items available by handing out free Green Jute shopping bags and other eco products. Home made cakes, tea and coffee were on sale and this added to the social atmosphere of the event. Everyone was invited to enter a prize draw for one of several attractive, practical and sustainable prizes donated by Onya Bags UK, an Australian company, now with a base in Suffolk, selling great re-usable products (see [www.onyabags.co.uk](http://www.onyabags.co.uk)).

Give & take was a new concept for the 100 + people who came along, but it proved to be enormously popular, both for the donors who wanted to declutter, and the takers who found some very useful items that they needed.

We invited people to write their thoughts about the event as they left and comments included; 'my brother recently bought a new flat and was then made redundant- I've been able to get him things for the flat'; 'it is good to be able to show the children how to share'; 'I didn't bring anything this time, but next time I will do'. There was strong support for a repeat event and also a couple of suggestions of other things that could be done for the community such as lunches for older isolated residents.

Dislequality will be holding a review meeting to evaluate the event and decide what to do next. It is highly likely that, by popular demand, there will be another Give& Take event in 2012.

**Patrice Van Cleemput**

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## Carbon Conversations

Carbon Conversations is 6 inspiring, practical meetings on low-carbon living. It was recently featured in the Guardian as one of the 20 best climate change solutions

- based on the psychology of change
- emotionally engaging
- technically rigorous
- up to date, attractive handbook, games and materials



[carbonconversations.org](http://carbonconversations.org)

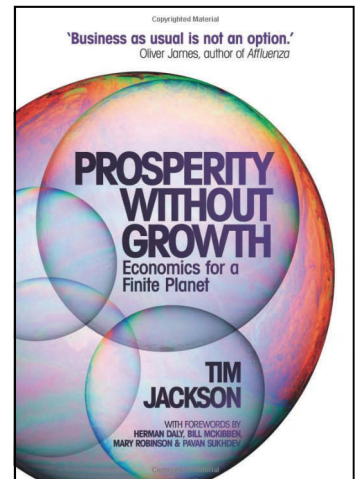
Led by trained volunteer facilitators, groups of 6-8 members meet in homes, community centres, workplaces or other venues. The six 2-hour meetings engage people both emotionally and practically, helping them overcome the barriers often associated with making large carbon reductions. Members explore the basic climate change problem, their responses to it, their ideas for a low-carbon future and the four key areas of the footprint – home energy, travel, food and other consumption. Most members make reductions of 1 tonne CO<sub>2</sub> during the meetings and develop plans to halve their footprints over a longer period.

See <http://carbonconversations.org/>

## Prosperity without growth

I was thinking about the book *Prosperity Without Growth* by Prof. Tim Jackson, economics commissioner on the (now abolished) Sustainable Development Commission, preparing for introducing the subject at a discussion group, at a time (August 2011) when most western economies seemed to be in an economic crisis, and when major disturbances broke out in London and other English cities. The book was published in 2009, but seems to have much relevance to these recent events.

The book covers the environmental limits, particularly on greenhouse gas emissions, which if not respected, will lead to risks to life and to society. While it could be possible, with major efforts, to reduce emissions, to limit these risks and leave atmospheric carrying capacity for developing countries, this would not be possible with an assumption of indefinite economic growth. While greenhouse gas emission levels can be decoupled from economic output to a degree, decoupling has its limits. The Stern Review was too optimistic in saying that major reductions in emissions are possible with only very small reduction in economic growth.



Jackson also writes of resource limits – eg energy, fresh water, food production and minerals, and notes major price rises on many commodities. Thus, through increased competition for limited resources from eg China, India and other rapidly developing countries and higher costs of energy from non-fossil sources, the western standard of living on the present mix of consumption patterns (unrestricted transport, profligate energy hungry activities) will be reduced – certainly in relative terms, probably in absolute terms.

Jackson talks of prosperity in terms of people's capabilities for flourishing, that they can take part fully in their community and in society. For this they clearly need basics (food, shelter, clothing, necessities for good health), and also education, availability of fulfilling work, and enough material things to be able to fully take part in society.

There are many studies which show that once basic needs are met (average income per head about \$5000 pa), objective measures of wellbeing (life expectancy, infant mortality etc) and happiness (subjective and as indicated by neurological measurements) do not uniformly improve.

Further, it seems that people who put less emphasis on material consumption tend to feel more fulfilled. The importance of participating in social and community life is huge in terms of well being. But many aspects of the present pressurised lifestyles militate against human interactions – stress, lack of time, TV, computers, smaller isolated households etc. Growth is not necessary for human capacity for flourishing. However, with the present economic system, as labour productivity rises, growth is needed to avoid unemployment: growth is necessary for macro-economic stability.

How do we resolve this dilemma – indefinite growth is not possible due to ecological and resource limits, but growth is needed for economic stability?

Jackson proposes more activity be devoted to areas of human interactions (in health, social care, support of the elderly, developing young people's talents etc) and providing better local environments (eg local green spaces, important for wellbeing). These are areas of activity where productivity by definition is limited. Reduced working hours would give more time for human interactions within and outside families. Also things like live music, dance, cafe society will not be limited. (These are usually thriving in quite poor countries)

Massive advertising and feeding the appetite for fashion leads to the present extreme consumerist culture – short lifespan products and rapid obsolescence. Many material purchases have social and psychological

significance - to self image and social status. But within any country, goods are positional, that is the degree to which they are valued is relative to the goods other people have. Growth is a zero-sum game. Tim Jackson cites *The Spirit Level* (Wilkinson and Pickett) showing more equal societies come out better on virtually all indicators of well being.

To resolve the dilemma between limits to growth and the need for economic stability and human flourishing, Tim Jackson suggests, as well as the transfer of much economic activity to person intensive activities as outlined above, investment in projects which help the environment. These include massive building energy efficiency schemes, renewable energy, improving public transport, better pedestrian routes, training young people, and developing resilience in face of environmental threats.

TJ says it is no good telling people to change their way: there is a need for communities and groups to show a good flourishing lifestyle on a less materialistic basis. (Here he reads like a paid up member of Living Witness!)

There are many factors which lead to the disturbances in cities. However, a major cause must be that significant sections of society, especially young and ethnic minority, feel totally alienated from society, with poor job prospects and bombarded by advertising giving the message that having the latest fashion item is essential to achieving respect and status. Real fulfilling jobs could help get these groups more integrated into society, being respected for their increasing skills.

BUT we are now in the middle of an economic mess – possibly leading to a recession in many western countries, especially the USA, Greece, Ireland and Italy. This crisis is partly precipitated by the huge bail-outs governments gave to the banks in the 2008 crisis, itself a result of many years excessive consumption fuelled by debt. This debt was both personal (encouraged by government policy to keep the economy growing as a greater proportion of wealth went to the super rich), and government debt, especially US debt to the Chinese. On the basis of present economic thinking, growth is essential to get out of the mess, and to avoid even more unemployment. However, growth of consumer spending (as encouraged by the deputy governor of the Bank of England, Charlie Bean in 2008 who told people to “spend, spend, spend”) will worsen the country’s debts.

Investment in projects which provide an economic return in the relatively short term (as well as economic and environmental returns in the long term) would help reduce debt in the medium term. For example massive home energy efficiency schemes would reduce fuel imports and spending on countering fuel poverty and would be most effective in reducing unemployment [The government’s Green Deal is unlikely to turn out to be nearly big enough – insufficient incentives for householders]. Improving public transport and pedestrian and cycling facilities, improving housing and local environments, renewable energy projects are important as economic investments as well as for their environmental benefits. [In contrast, our Chancellor of the Exchequer is relying on the private sector and consumer spending to boost growth: much of this spending would in fact go abroad on imported goods, and spent on ephemeral goods and services which would have no long term benefit to the economy].

The “Big Society” idea (presently rather vague) could have some relevance, but the government is reducing prospects for its success it by making life for voluntary organisations more difficult and reducing the opportunities for local initiatives by starving local authorities of funding. (90% of the contracts in “The work programme” went to big private firms rather than voluntary organisations who have the local knowledge).

Jackson’s ideas on building communities, involvement in communal activities, enhancing people based services and developing people’s skills seem relevant to the present situation. Can we help mainstream the ideas given the present near crisis situation in all strands of sustainability – economic, social and environmental?

**Martin Quick**

## Remembrance ceremony and pomp

This is my experience of wearing the only white poppy at Norwich's parade, until I sold one to a Labour councillor, and got stopped in the street by a woman looking for one. (All the Greens were at a white poppy event later in the day, but someone had to represent the Green Party Councillors at the mainstream event, so I did that too). Trying to be open to new light, I found it surprisingly moving. I think you expect to influence people, you have to be open to being influenced by them, and I was.



[www.thefullwiki.org](http://www.thefullwiki.org)

Next year we (CND, Quakers) plan to go all out to make white poppies available in all the places that have ever put up a poster for a campaign group event.

## Remembrance ceremony and pomp

Safe clean City, shining in the sun  
Birds' eye view from the bigwig balcony

Soldiers march below, remembering  
soldiers marching, hurting, dying  
Doing what soldiers do for a better world.

Stepping out of comfort zone, peacenik ghetto  
I hearing stories, listen to what words can't say  
Intimate fear, horror, loss, grief, rage - and above all love.  
Shared experience, wrapped in music and respect  
Shared history, common purpose  
To live well, love life, accept death.

'For your tomorrow, we gave our today'  
Shall we honour it?  
Shall we preserve or squander our children's tomorrow?

Will we crucify our children's children,  
our neighbours' neighbours  
our planet's lifeblood?  
Will we turn our swords into drones, our shields into checkpoints?

Or will we remember our shared inheritance  
Defend our common ground  
Give some part of our today  
for our earth's tomorrow?

**Lesley Grahame**  
Norwich

## Book Reviews

### My review of Resurgence

Resurgence Nov/Dec 2011 No.269

I found this issue particularly interesting and inspiring, though, of-course, they all are! This one is entitled "Wellbeing, Happy People, Happy Planet", and has several articles about happiness including an article considering the happiness of animals. It is being discovered by more and more people that happiness does not depend upon material wealth and accumulation of "stuff". So measurements of GDP are largely irrelevant to what people experience in their lives.

Well, you may say, of-course, we knew this all along. But it seems politicians did not know and even now some refuse to see the truth. However, much research has been done, and more is being done, and the various articles bring out different aspects. Bhutan has had a happiness index for many years, instead of GDP, so it has recognised the importance of how people actually feel.

One of the most interesting articles I found was by Nic Marks, who lists five ways to wellbeing: Connect, Be active, Take notice,, Keep Learning, Give. Nic Marks is the founder of The Centre for Well-being at the New Economics Foundation, and the author of The Happiness Manifesto. There is also an article by Robert Holden who set up The Happiness Project in 1994, and has written a book "Be Happy". Another article describes how helpful a short time of quiet and meditation is, especially in schools, in reducing discord and disruption of classes. There is a world map showing the Happy Planet Index of the various countries, about which I wondered how it was obtained. Britain does not come out very well and the USA is worse. However, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Jamaica and the Philippines have quite high indices. It seems our government is taking these discoveries quite seriously, and David Cameron has commissioned a new survey called Measuring National Wellbeing, so we need to keep this in mind when campaigning. The general conclusion I reached was that people value community, relationships, and a sense of purpose.

So reducing our carbon footprint and generally living more simply can bring about more happiness, not less, especially if it is done in a community.

**Anne Adams**

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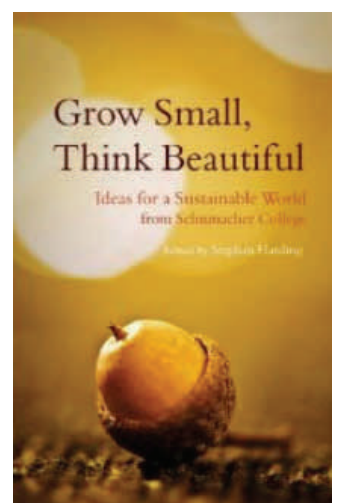
### Grow Small, Think Beautiful

I want to orient you of a book that I have a chapter in, which came out recently. It has the title: *Grow Small, Think Beautiful: Ideas for a Sustainable World* from Schumacher College (edited by Stephan Harding), published by Floris Books in 2011.

My chapter is called: "Be the Change that You Seek -- Wherever You Are!: Life Philosophy and Depth-ecology of Place". In the article, I mention there is a section called "A renewed sense of the sacred", where I address my own life philosophy from an earthQuaker position.

**Per Ingvar Haukeland**

Norwegian Quaker living in Telemark, Norway



## Poems

### Eternal Journey

As the crimson flame of life  
Breaks slowly  
Above the horizon,  
The white, frosted meadows,  
With trees and hedgerows  
Of sculptured ice,  
Speak loudly  
Of your presence.

Once more  
Upon this journey,  
As another day begins,  
Without effort  
Or intrusion,  
Through the peace  
And tranquillity  
Of your silent voice,  
The moment becomes eternal,  
And the journey  
Begins again.

Chris Roe

### To Dream of Spring

Harvest is gathered,  
Fields lay bare,  
Already turned to the plough.  
Pheasants and partridge lose their cover.  
Grain piled high in the barn,  
Straw stacked for winter use.

The evening breeze, sharper, cooler,  
Colours, dancing on the autumn wind.  
Trees in winter silhouette,  
An early morning frost,  
A dusting of snow,  
Cold, dark, winter evenings.

A glowing fire in the grate,  
Another log brightens the flame,  
A warm drink,  
A comfortable chair,  
Time to rest,  
To sleep,  
To dream of spring.

Chris Roe  
Norfolk

## Letters

I think we should remember the hundreds of munitions workers in factories during the war – mainly young women - who died due to poisoning from TNT and other chemicals. Many died of toxic liver overload & aplastic anaemia (bone marrow destruction.) Those dying later of leukaemia and other cancers will sadly not be on any list of remembrance. For years after the war, many people who lived near contaminated areas where the munitions factories were situated, died of these conditions. I understand that an area at Penworthan near Preston in Lancashire, had many cases of aplastic anaemia & leukaemia.

A friend of mine's mother-in-law was a munitions worker in World War Two. She became pregnant at the time and was affected by exposure to the TNT and suffered megaloblastic anaemia - a bone marrow disorder. She subsequently also developed thyroid problems. TNT is a genotoxin, meaning it can cause genetic damage which can be passed down to future generations. All four of her children have thyroid problems & her two granddaughters also have some milder (so far) thyroid problems.

The genetic damage does not necessarily mean the condition will develop, but it leaves those affected more susceptible, especially if they are exposed to other toxic substances in the future. The number of people who have been affected by contact with TNT is unknown as there will be thousands of the following generations affected, who will have no idea of the cause of their condition. These are all casualties of war who have paid a high price for their war efforts.

For a few details of those who died visit:

<http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=149755>

A. Wills

## ...more Letters

### Walking

I admire Roy Vicker's walking approach to problem solving. I too love to walk to clear the cobwebs from my head. I've also been on long walking and train journeys that take me to people's homes where I'm only staying over a night or two. My solution to the dilemma of sheets is to use a camper's sleeping bag liner on top of the host's bed. The liners are often made from silk, are washable, and very roomy. The silk helps keep the chill out and the lightness keeps one cool. I tell my host that I am only using their pillow case (though I could carry that too, and now will, come to think of it) and ask for a blanket if I need it. As to supermarkets, I can only suggest farmer's markets and local stores, when possible, that have some local produce, cheeses, and breads. Our food coops here in the States are not a chain, each is independent, and each is owned by the shopper-members (though you don't have to be a member to shop there). They support and feature local growers and producers. Keep up the great walking!

**Ruah Swennerfelt**

Burlington, Vermont Monthly Meeting,  
New England Yearly Meeting, US

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### Animal Misery

A few months ago Ramsgate Harbour on the Isle of Thanet in Kent, owned by Thanet Council, started to use it for the export of live animals by ship to France for onward transportation by truck, to the Low Countries, Italy, and Spain, involving lengthy journeys of hundreds of miles, without food and water. The animals, mainly calves just a few weeks old are to be fattened in Veal "Pens", unable to move for upwards of six months, and sheep, and lambs probably to be slaughtered for Halal meat by having their throats cut, and bled to death. There is no reason for this, as it is not a requirement in the Koran, or in the Hebrew Bible, it is just a "custom". The people of Thanet have been opposing this vile trade, and a few weeks ago over 400 turned out in the rain, to demonstrate against it!

The local council say they can't stop Ramsgate Harbour being used to export live animals, without a change in the law, so Kent Against Live Animals (KALE) with local councillor Ian Driver, set up an E Petition but need 100,000 signatures before the government will consider it.

Go to:- <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/16024> and sign up online, to help stop this vile trade in animal misery.

In Friendship, **Dennis Franklin**

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### Nanoparticles

Issue 74 of earthQuaker includes a letter about nanoparticles. It cites a research article by Niessner and others in the ACS Nano journal, reporting that exposure to some types of nanoparticles can increase irregular heartbeats in an isolated rodent heart. The letter mentions the presence of manufactured nanoparticles of "carbon black" and titanium dioxide in various products such as dyes, toothpaste and paint.

I have had a look at the journal article. It reports irregular heartbeats associated with exposure to some types of nanoparticles only for concentrations of at least 2 billion nanoparticles per millilitre. This is two thousand times the worst-case concentration exposure reported for workers manufacturing and handling nanoparticles. (See Heterberg et al. in Inhalation Toxicology 22(8):679-94).

A "nanoparticle" just means something that is less than a 100 nanometres wide (100 nanometres = one hundred-thousandth of a centimetre). I am not a medical expert, but it seems reasonable to me that just because something is very small should not mean that it is necessarily bad for your health.

Peace, **Miranda Mowbray**

## Diary events 2012

All events at Quaker Community, Bamford, Hope Valley, Derbys., S33 0DA unless specified otherwise.

13 - 17 February

### Low Carbon Living

A retreat exploring the spiritual and practical challenges of climate friendly living. Find out how it can be a joyful experience and how to get the support you need.

£160



A meal at the autumn Living Witness Link group at Bamford. Photo by Patrice Van Cleemput

2 - 4 March

### Introduction to Permaculture - Design for Living

At Woodbrooke. This is a fantastic opportunity to work and stay in Birmingham's largest organically managed garden. You will be guided by a very experienced permaculture teacher and designer and receive some one to one support with your own design work.

Tutor: Lizz Roe £190 ensuite, £180 standard

enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk [www.woodbrooke.org.uk](http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk)

21 - 25 March

### Nature Walk

Gentle walking and learning about some of the ecosystems in Hope Valley. £160

23 - 27 April

### Spirituality of Climate Change

Approaching the climate crisis through several different kinds of spiritual practice; learning from the approaches of prophets, mystics and Quaker activists. £160

4 - 6 May

### Living Witness Link Group Weekend

Connect with the national network of Friends and Meetings engaged in our sustainability witness. Build the support we need in becoming a low carbon sustainable community. To include training in facilitation for Link Reps to help them support their own Meeting in making best use of the Toolkit. £80

17 - 20 May

### Quaker Testimony on Sustainability

What are the roots of our sustainability witness in Quaker faith and practice and the established testimonies? Is there a testimony on sustainability? How are we led to act? £120

6 - 8 July

### Living in the End time?

Early friends thought they were living in the End Times. What are the resonances for us now with the Triple Crunch of climate change, commodity crises and economic turmoil? £90

20 - 24 August

### Living Witness Summer School

Theme to be decided. £160

5 - 7 October

### Link Group Gathering

Connect with the national network of Quaker Meetings engaged in our sustainability witness. £80

**For other events at the Quaker Community see; [www.quakercommunity.org.uk](http://www.quakercommunity.org.uk)**

## Deadline for the next issue of earthQuaker - 15th Feb 2011

Please post or email contributions to the editor,  
Dee Sayce, 7, Bowden Crescent, New Mills, High Peak, SK22 4LN  
or 01663 308656 07837578382 or email: [dee@livingwitness.org.uk](mailto:dee@livingwitness.org.uk)

All contributions welcome - articles, reports, poems, ideas, letters

Include your postal address and telephone number or email address but we will not include contributors' contact details in earthQuaker unless specifically asked to.  
Members wishing to contact a contributor can get in touch through the editor—contact details above.  
Where email addresses need to be included they will be converted into images so that machines can not read them.

We reserve the right to edit but will always try to check substantial edits with the author.

The Dalai Lama, when asked what surprised him most about humanity, answered “Man.

Because he sacrifices his health in order to make money.

Then he sacrifices money to recuperate his health.

And then he is so anxious about the future that he does not enjoy the present; the result being that he does not live in the present or the future; he lives as if he is never going to die, and then dies having never really lived.”

### Membership

I wish to join Living Witness as an individual member.

Suggested donation £10.00  
(£3.00 for age 18-25);  
Free to under 18's.

Name:

Please make cheque payable to  
“Living Witness Project”

Address:

Email/phone:

and send to:  
Living Witness  
Quaker Community  
Water Lane  
Bamford  
Hope Valley  
S33 0DA

**Delete as appropriate**—I prefer earthQuaker:

by post (b&w)

by email as a pdf (colour)

I am happy to access it from [www.livingwitness.org.uk](http://www.livingwitness.org.uk) (colour)

I enclose £

Gift Aid declaration (please tick box if appropriate):

I would like you to reclaim tax on my donations (you must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax equal to the tax we reclaim on your donations).

Date:

**Living Witness (LW) is a Quaker charity supporting Friends' witness to sustainable living and taking it to the wider community in Britain and elsewhere.**



LW has worked since 2002 with a growing network of Quaker meetings, connected through regular link group gatherings, newsletters and shared resources.

At the beginning of 2008 LWP merged with Quaker Green Action, which since 1986 has been the main forum for Friends sharing a Concern for sustainability.

We welcome both individual Friends and meetings as members of our network and participants in our gatherings. Please get in touch with the LW co-ordinator if you would like a workshop or speaker session in your meeting.

The co-ordinator is Laurie Michaelis.

The office address is Living Witness , Quaker Community, Water Lane, Bamford, Hope Valley S33 0DA  
To contact Laurie by email use as before: [laurie@livingwitness.org.uk](mailto:laurie@livingwitness.org.uk)

Website is: [www.livingwitness.org.uk](http://www.livingwitness.org.uk)

Where publications including earthQuaker (colour version!) can be downloaded.

**If undelivered please return to:**

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